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requires discrimination and sound judgment, that works of art may not be judged upon narrow and bigoted principles, or homely and even repulsive virtue be deprived of its just due.

President Hopkins is in some danger of committing the former error, when he draws so wide a distinction between a taste for the fine arts and for the works of nature; when he depreciates the cultivation of painting, sculpture, architecture, and poetry, because they are all liable to great abuse, because they often pander directly to vice, because the pleasures received from them too frequently are of a *sensuous* character, and of short duration, because they have flourished among corrupt and degraded nations, and because the enjoyment of them is necessarily confined to a few, and often becomes a ground of pride and silly ostentation. Surely, these arts cover so much ground in the proper domain of taste, that if the moral feelings be arrayed in stern opposition to them, the proposition which our lecturer endeavours to establish must be abandoned at once, and the monitions of conscience must wage perpetual and uncompromising war with the pleasures of the imagination. A far wiser proceeding would be, to subject the nature and influence of the arts to a close analysis, and to show thereby, that the elements, having a corrupt and debasing tendency, are also offensive to good taste, and detract from the pleasing effect of the whole. To argue against the use of a thing from its possible abuse is but poor reasoning in ethics, and it amounts to positive absurdity in the province of taste and criticism.

The sweeping censure, which our author casts upon novel-reading is quite as ill-judged as his reprobation of a taste for art. All works of fiction cannot be condemned, without discrediting all exercise of the imagination, and stinting the mental appetite to a meagre diet on matters of fact. No education can be complete and generous, which thus cramps the faculties, and lessens the natural endowments, of man. The sternest morality, the keenest sense of duty, may find support and confirmation in the wonder-working pages of Shakspeare and Scott.

6. — *Amenities of Literature*. By J. D'ISRAELI. In Two Volumes. New York: I. & H. G. Langley. 1841. 12mo. pp. 405 and 461.

WITH no extraordinary intellectual powers, Mr. D'Israeli, Senior, has furnished several of the most entertaining and popular works in contemporary literature. He seems to possess a

tact, or instinct, for the collection of racy literary anecdotes, with no uncommon power to appreciate or present philosophical views of literature, as an exponent of the progress of the human mind. But everybody reads him. His "*Quarrels of Authors*," his "*Calamities of Authors*," his "*Curiosities of Literature*," and his "*Amenities of Literature*," have carried his name, as an industrious and sagacious collector, wherever the English language is studied.

The present work is more elaborate and valuable than any of its predecessors. It consists of separate researches, which Mr. D'Israeli has been making, for many years past, into the history of the English vernacular literature ; a subject as magnificent as the most ambitious scholar could desire, but which none but a scholar of rare powers, a Schlegel or a Hallam, should dare to attempt. Mr. D'Israeli has been prevented by blindness from prosecuting his original design ; but the contributions he has made, in this work, are very curious and valuable. His sketches of the early English literature, of the poets contemporary with and subsequent to Chaucer, particularly, are highly interesting, and filled with details that to most readers will be entirely new. They will be surprised at what he tells them of the immense mass of old English poetry, — of epics and romances in verse, compared with which, the *Iliad*, as to length, is a trifle, — still lying unpublished, in the British collections. There is work enough for English scholars to do, to draw out these hidden treasures of their vernacular literature, and to illustrate them with suitable commentaries. This they must do, or submit to the disgrace of lingering far behind their great literary neighbours, the scholars of Germany and France. The men of letters in these two nations are enthusiastically devoted to the labor of bringing to light, explaining, and polishing the elder monuments of their native literature. And their labors are rapidly and surely laying the foundations of a new historical and poetical literature ; and the materials out of which its forms are to be wrought by the genius of a coming age, the able and industrious scholars of the present are intensely occupied in drawing from the obscure or buried treasures of the past.

We hope the work of D'Israeli may have its effect in stirring up the scholarship of Britain to engage more ardently in this great preparation. Why should not the leisure of academic life, at the two wealthy universities, be turned to more account ? What more appropriate sphere of intellectual toil could the accomplished men, who hold the well-endowed fellowships of those ancient seats of English learning, desire, than to illustrate the noble and abundant literature of

the mother tongue? If a man deserves to be made a bishop in the English church because he has edited a Greek tragedy, he ought to be made something more, — an archbishop at least, — for a critical edition of an ancient English epic.

Though Mr. D'Israeli's book is entertaining and valuable, it cannot be said to be well written. He has no great command of English style. He has no glow and eloquence of language; his phraseology is pinched and painful. He has nothing of the tumultuous copiousness, that foams and flashes through the novels of his son. Very frequently his language is deformed by awkward expressions, and sometimes by violations of the English idiom. He has declared open war against the purists, and makes new words, — *neologisms*, he calls them, — without the slightest fear of criticism before his eyes. This he often does when there is no necessity, even when the old words would be a great deal better. But these are but faults of a work which deserves, on the whole, high praise. We regret that the American publishers were not more careful to have the proof-sheets well read. There are many typographical errors, which deform the page and offend the reader's eye, and which a little labor would have avoided. A book that is worth reprinting at all, is worth printing correctly.

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7. — *A Complete Family Registration. Part I. Containing Charts, and Directions for Registering, on a New and Simple Plan, the Birth, Marriage, and Death of the several Members of the Family, and for Ascertaining and Exhibiting at once their Connexions, Relative Situation, Heirs at Law, Ancestors, Descendants, and Generation. Part II. Containing Forms and Suggestions for Registering other Particulars, proper or useful to be retained in Remembrance, relative to every Member of any Family, from which a Particular Biography or History of any Individual or Family may be easily Compiled.* By LEMUEL SHATTUCK, Member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, &c. &c. Boston: W. D. Ticknor. 4to. pp. 300.

MR. SHATTUCK is entitled to the thanks of those who value works of this description, both for the undertaking, and for its successful accomplishment. The Register is divided into two parts. The first contains various tables for family registrations, with directions as to the manner of filling them up. They extend through six generations in the direct line, both paternal and maternal, with a blank space for the name of each